

New Franklin Viaduct Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is MoDOT proposing to do with the Viaduct?

A. The bridge once performed a function of vital importance, it separated Route 5 traffic from the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad (MKT or Katy). Since the railroad abandoned this line, this function is no longer needed. We are proposing to remove the Viaduct, and place Route 5 on new pavement at ground level.

Q. Why doesn't MoDOT fix the bridge?

A. We have nearly six hundred bridges in the region, and nearly 25% are in poor, or worse, condition. We have nearly four thousand miles of roadway in the region, and approximately 50% of our roadways are in poor condition. We are attempting to stretch your tax dollars as far as possible to address these issues, but it is an up-hill battle. With so many unmet transportation needs within the region, it would be irresponsible for MoDOT to spend tax dollars to rehabilitate a bridge that is no longer needed.

Q. How much would it cost to fix the bridge?

A. It would cost at least \$6 Million to remove all of the structural deficiencies currently present in the bridge, and even then, we would not have addressed the functional and safety deficiencies. It is possible that all of the deteriorating concrete and steel could be located and fixed. However, the bridge would still be narrow (narrow lanes, no shoulders), would still be load-posted (restricted for commercial truck traffic), would still have poor site-distance (a driver can't see over the top of the bridge), and would still have safety issues (cars hit the end of the bridge).

Q. What makes the New Franklin Viaduct historic?

A. Any cultural resource that is at least 50 years old and is eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places is considered a historic property. The New Franklin Viaduct is eligible under two criteria, Engineering and Transportation History.

Q. How much will it cost to remove the Viaduct?

A. To completely remove the structure and place Route 5 on new pavement at ground level will cost approximately \$1.3 Million. In addition, placing Route 5 on pavement will significantly reduce our future maintenance costs, as it costs less per year to maintain a roadway than a bridge. This allows us to further stretch your tax dollars.

Q. With funding being so tight, where is the money coming from to remove the bridge?

A. We are applying for funding that was authorized by our US Congress following the Minneapolis Bridge failure. Our congressional representatives authorized One Billion Dollars, to be distributed to the states to address bridge issues. The State of Missouri has been authorized up to \$26 Million to use statewide.

Q. Can we use this federal funding to completely rehabilitate the bridge?

A. Unfortunately, no. There are a number of criteria a bridge project needs to meet to qualify for this federal funding. One of these criteria is that the project needs to remove all deficiencies with the structure. As mentioned in an earlier question, even if all of the structural deficiencies were addressed, the bridge would still have functional and safety deficiencies. These deficiencies cannot be corrected, as they are inherent within the bridge design itself. The bridge was adequate for 1940 traffic, but not for the traffic we experience today.

Q. Could Route 5 be relocated and the Viaduct maintained as a walk bridge?

A. Yes, this is a possibility. However, if we were to relocate Route 5 to either side of the bridge, it would directly impact approximately half a dozen residential or commercial properties. This would require the acquisition of several homes and the removal of most of the driveways of the remaining homes. In addition, we could not continue to maintain this structure if it was not part of Route 5. A third party would need to take over ownership and maintenance of the Viaduct indefinitely. As stated in an earlier question, no third party has come forward offering assistance.

Q. What will be done with the city streets next to the bridge and the driveways?

A. The frontage roads next to the bridge will remain in place and the existing driveways will continue to function as they do today. There will be a green buffer space between Route 5 and the frontage roads, similar to what exists today between the Viaduct and the frontage roads. This green buffer space can be modified to fit the need of the City of New Franklin and its citizens.

Q. Will an at-grade intersection with the Katy Trail be dangerous?

A. No. This location is within the City Limits of New Franklin and the speed limit is 30 mph. Route 5 traffic will have the right of way, and Katy Trail pedestrian traffic will yield to all vehicular traffic. In addition, through improvements in lighting, signing, and pavement marking, the crossing will be very safe. We anticipate that the improvements will increase safety for all vehicular and pedestrian traffic within the project area.

Q. What can be done to reduce noise and dust while the improvements are taking place?

A. We will do everything we can to minimize the amount of noise and dust created by the project. Restricting the work to daylight hours only, requiring up-to-date mufflers on all equipment, and requiring the use of water to minimize dust potential can help meet this goal.

Q. While the Viaduct is closed, how will traffic get across the Katy Trail?

A. Local traffic will be able to get across the Katy Trail via a temporary road within the project limits. Non-local traffic will be temporarily redirected to a signed detour.

Q. What will be done with the Viaduct once it is removed?

A. We plan to recycle the bridge. We estimate that by crushing the concrete, we can produce approximately 5000 tons of rock. City, County, and State crews will use this rock on roadways in the area. In addition, if a third party wished to preserve a piece of the bridge in some manner, we would work with them to accommodate their preservation efforts.